



NEW ACTION STORIES

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AUTHORITY

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A CHARLTON PUBLICATION

MONTE
HALE

The Biggest and Boldest
Real-Life Cowboy
of Them All
6 ft. 5 in.
OF
SOLID
MUSCLE

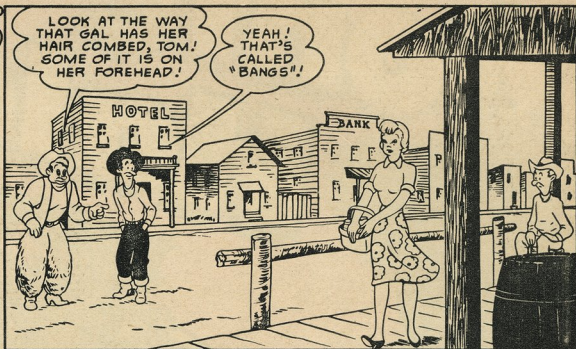


WEB COMIC
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MOLASSES MOUTH

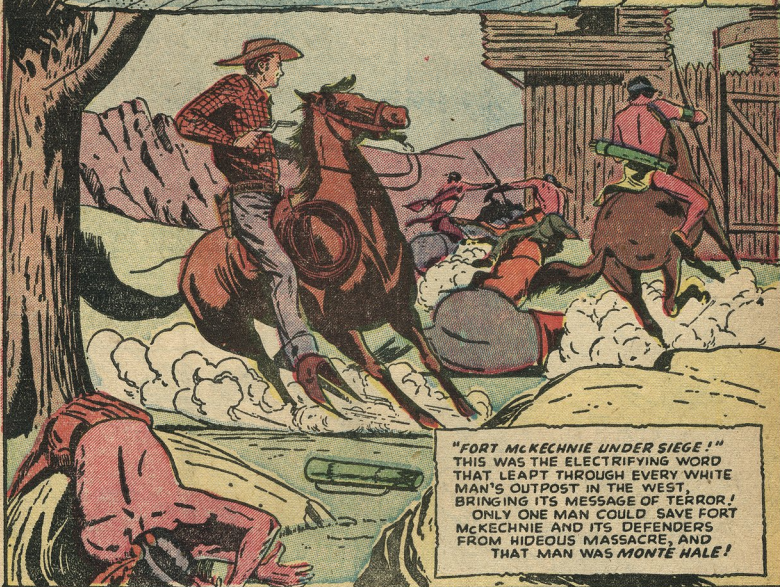


HE'S DYNAMITE!



MONTE HALE

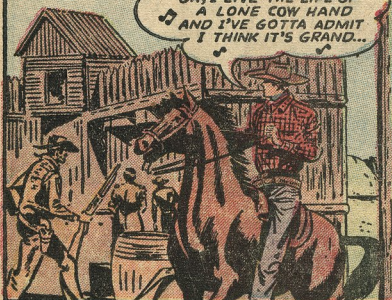
in "FORT OF PERIL"



"FORT MCKECHNIE UNDER SIEGE!"
THIS WAS THE ELECTRIFYING WORD
THAT LEAPT THROUGH EVERY WHITE
MAN'S OUTPOST IN THE WEST,
BRINGING ITS MESSAGE OF TERROR!
ONLY ONE MAN COULD SAVE FORT
MCKECHNIE AND ITS DEFENDERS
FROM HIDEOUS MASSACRE, AND
THAT MAN WAS MONTE HALE!

ON THE DAY OF THE ATTACK, MONTE HALE
RODE INTO FORT MCKECHNIE . . .

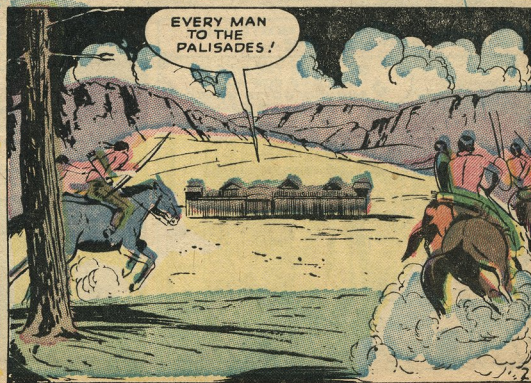
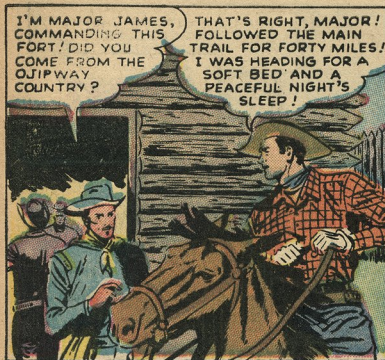
OH, I LIVE THE LIFE OF
A LONE COW HAND
AND I'VE GOTTA ADMIT
I THINK IT'S GRAND...



NEVER SAW SO MANY "HOMBRES"
PACKING THEIR SHOOTING IRONS!
WONDER WHAT'S IN THE
WIND?



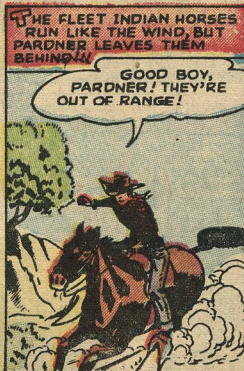
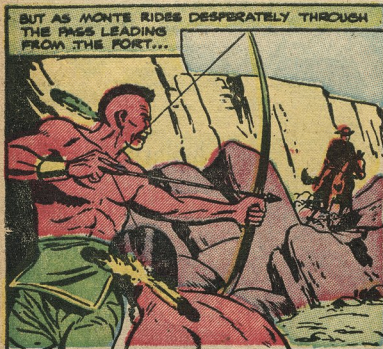
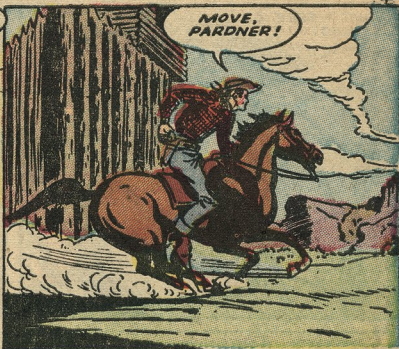
MONTE HALE WESTERN



MONTE HALE WESTERN



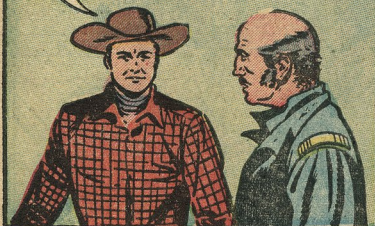
MONTE HALE WESTERN



MONTE HALE WESTERN

THAT'S THE STORY, SIR!
MAJOR JAMES NEEDS
TROOPS AND AMMUNITION
TO BEAT OFF THE
ATTACK! AND HE
NEEDS THEM
AT ONCE!

I'M AFRAID
I CAN'T
HELP HIM!



EVERY ABLE-BODIED MAN I COULD
SPARE IS OUT IN THE FIELD UNDER
MY SUBORDINATE, COLONEL FLETCHER!
IT'LL BE A DAY BEFORE MY FORT
SCOUT REACHES HIM WITH
THE NEWS!

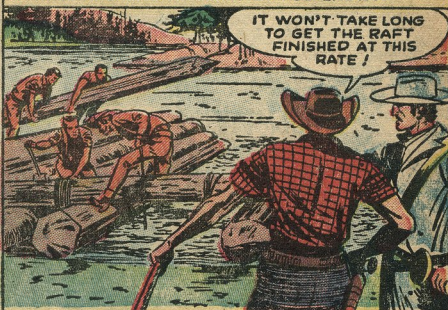


BUT WE'VE PLENTY
OF AMMUNITION!
ALL YOU NEED--
IF YOU CAN FIND
A WAY OF TRAN-
SPORTING IT DOWN
THE RIVER!

I RECKON
THAT CAN BE
ARRANGED,
COMMANDER!



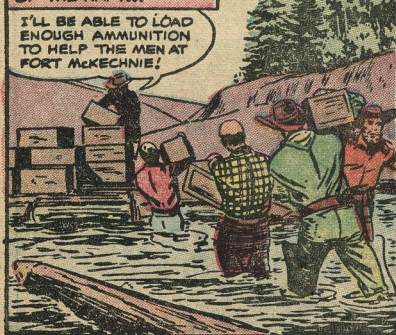
FROM THE VERY YOUNG AND THE VERY OLD, MONTE
HALE RECRUITS AN ARMY OF HELPERS....



IT WON'T TAKE LONG
TO GET THE RAFT
FINISHED AT THIS
RATE!

AFTER THE COMPLETION
OF THE RAFT...

I'LL BE ABLE TO LOAD
ENOUGH AMMUNITION
TO HELP THE MEN AT
FORT MCKECHNIE!



AND SOON...

GOOD
LUCK!

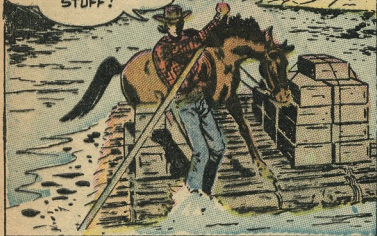
THANKS! I'LL
PROBABLY
NEED IT!



MONTE HALE WESTERN

AFTER MANY HOURS OF CONSTANT BATTLE AGAINST SWIFT AND TREACHEROUS CURRENTS--

IF I CAN GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE FORT BEFORE THE QUIPWAYS SEE ME, I'LL HAVE A FIGHTING CHANCE TO DELIVER THIS STUFF!



WHAT'S THE TROUBLE, PARONER? YOU SENSE SOMETHING?

NEIGH! NEIGHH!

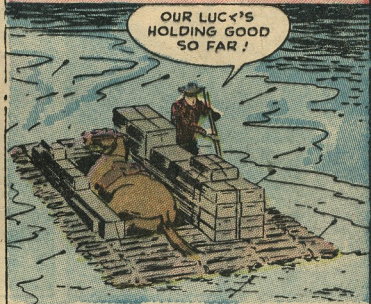


WAL, IT APPEARS WE'RE GOING TO HEAR FROM THE QUIPWAYS CONSIDERABLY SOONER THAN I EXPECTED!

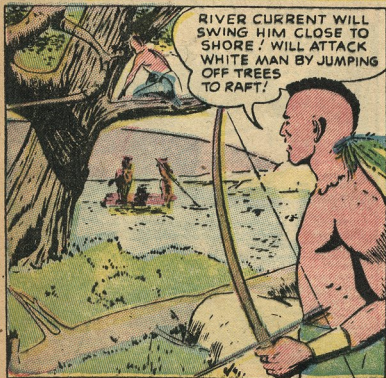


THROUGH A STORM OF ARROWS, MONTE HALE POLES THE UNWIELDY RAFT DOWNSTREAM WITH ITS PRECIOUS CARGO...

OUR LUCK'S HOLDING GOOD SO FAR!



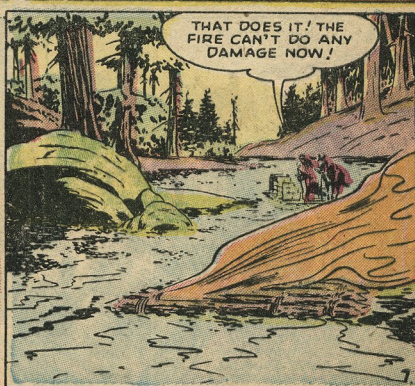
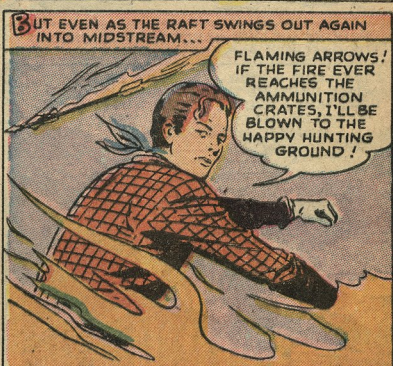
RIVER CURRENT WILL SWING HIM CLOSE TO SHORE! WILL ATTACK WHITE MAN BY JUMPING OFF TREES TO RAFT!



I WASN'T FIXING TO ENTERTAIN VISITORS!



MONTE HALE WESTERN



MONTE HALE WESTERN

FROM HERE ON IT'S UP TO YOU, PARDNER! DURING THE FIGHT, THE RAFT POLE FELL INTO THE WATER!

SPLASH!

BOTH MAN AND HIS WONDER HORSE, WHO TOWS THE LOADED RAFT AFTER HIM, BREAST THE SWIFT CURRENT....

NOT MUCH FURTHER NOW, PARDNER!

ON SHORE WILLING HANDS HELP TO UNLOAD THE PRECIOUS AMMUNITION....

CHIEF RED WATER WON'T CAPTURE THE FORT NOW! YOU'VE SAVED US ALL, MONTE!

MOST OF THE THANKS SHOULD GO TO PARDNER, SIR!

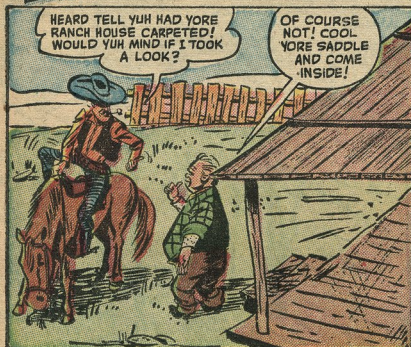
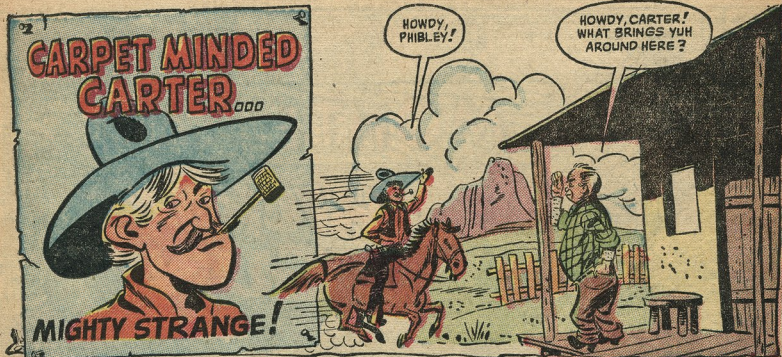
COLONEL FLETCHER AND THE REGULARS SHOULD HAVE WORD BY NOW THAT THE FORT'S BEING BESIEGED! THEY'LL COME UP BEHIND THE OJIPWAYS AND FORCE THEM TO SURRENDER! BUT WHEN THAT HAPPENS, THERE'S ONE FAVOR I'D LIKE TO ASK ON BEHALF OF PARDNER---

LET'S AMBLE ON, PARDNER!

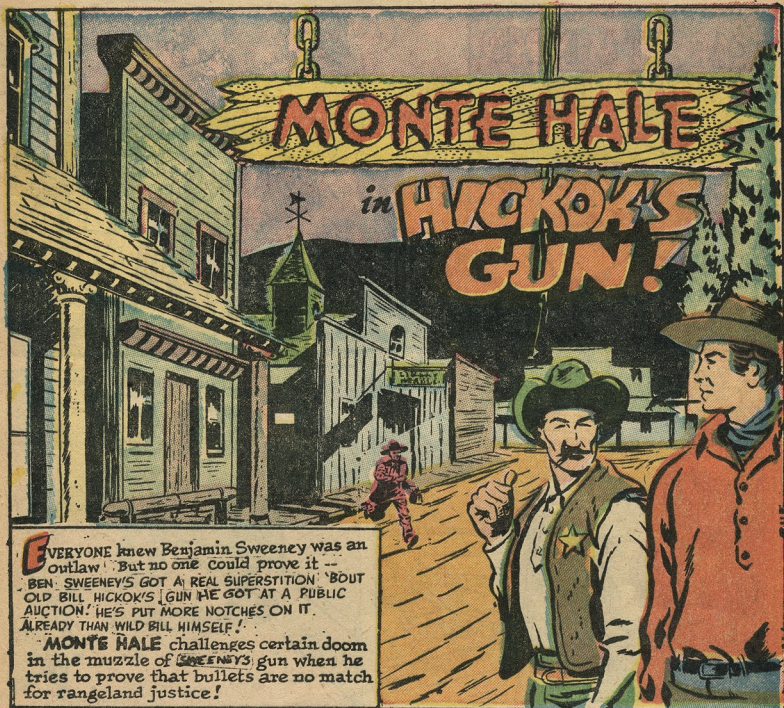
THE FAVOR WAS GRANTED. THAT IS HOW IT HAPPENS THAT THE PEACE TREATY WITH THE OJIPWAYS CONTAINS ONE MOST UNUSUAL SIGNATURE--A HOOFPRIINT!

-- AND TO THIS DAY THE OJIPWAYS' LEGEND HAS IT THAT A MIRACLE HORSE COMMANDED THE TROOPS AT FORT McKECHNIE THAT BROUGHT ABOUT THEIR DEFEAT!

MONTE HALE WESTERN



MONTE HALE WESTERN



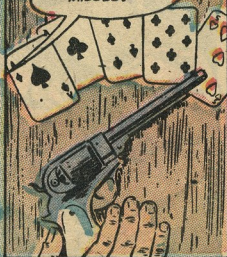
EVERYONE knew Benjamin Sweeney was an outlaw. But no one could prove it -- BEN SWEENEY'S GOT A REAL SUPERSTITION 'BOUT OLD BILL HICKOK'S GUN HE GOT AT A PUBLIC AUCTION! HE'S PUT MORE NOTCHES ON IT. ALREADY THAN WILD BILL HIMSELF!

MONTE HALE challenges certain doom in the muzzle of SWEENEY'S gun when he tries to prove that bullets are no match for rangeland justice!

MAYBE WE'D BETTER SADDLE UP AND SKEDADDLE, BEN! MONTE HALE AIN'T THE KIND OF HONNRE TO FOOL WITH! HE'S PURE PIZEN IN A GUNFIGHT!

I'M NOT WORRIED! NOT WHILE I'VE GOT THIS GUN!

I'M NOT WAITING 'ROUND FER MONTE HALE TO GIT ME EITHER! I'LL FIRE THE FIRST SHOT... AND MUH GUN NEVER MISSES!



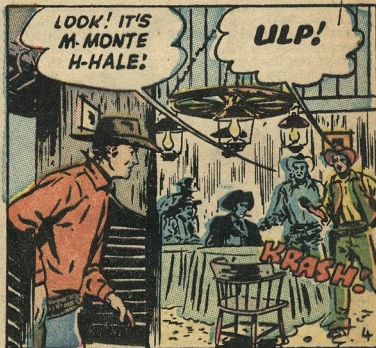
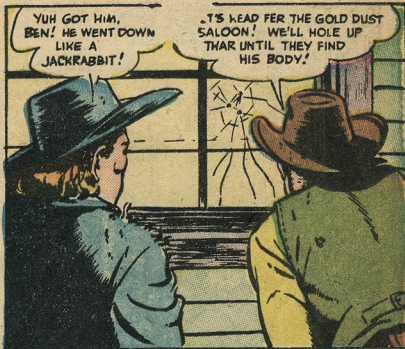
LATER, IN THE DARK ALLEYWAY OF A HOTEL ...

I FOUND OUT FROM THE HOTEL CLERK, BEN, THAT THIS IS HALE'S ROOM! THAT'S HALE SITTING IN THE CHAIR!

I COULDN'T ASK FER A BETTER TARGET, RED!



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I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! HE CAN'T BE ALIVE! I COULDN'T HAVE MISSED HIM AT THAT RANGE!

NEBBE IT WUZ SOMEBODY ELSE YUH SHOT, BEN!

I'M LOOKING FOR A COUPLE OF SPINELESS COYOTES ONE OF THEM TOOK A COUPLE OF SHOTS AT ME A LITTLE WHILE AGO! LUCKY FOR ME HIS AIM WAS BAD! ... ANY IDEA WHO MIGHT BE AFTER MY SKIN, SWEENEY?

N-N-O!

I'M GOING TO KEEP LOOKING UNTIL I FIND THEM! BUT I ALMOST HATE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE POOR CRITTERS! ANYBODY WHO SHOOTS AS BADLY AS THEY DO WON'T STAND MUCH OF A CHANCE!

I--I G-GUESS NOT!

Next day...

HEY, BEN! WE'RE SETTING UP PLANS FER ROBBING THE DEADWOOD STAGE THAT'S LEAVING TOWN TOMORROW! AREN'T YUH INTERESTED?

I JUST PLUMB CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT!

THAR'S NOTHING WRONG WITH MUH GUN! HOW COULD IT HAPPEN THAT...?

WE'VE GOT OTHER THINGS TO WORRY 'BOUT, BEN! HOW 'BOUT PUTTING YORE MIND TO IT?

I... HM... YEAH, SHORE, EVERYTHING'S FINE! JUST THE WAY WE PLANNED IT! BUT... UH... NEBBE WE OUGHT TO FERGIT IT FER AWHILE! A JOB LIKE THIS NEEDS PLENTY OF WORK AND THOUGHT!

NOT LOSING YORE NERVE, ARE YUH, BEN?

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO FOUND OUT THE DEADWOOD STAGE IS CARRYING TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS IN GOLD THIS TRIP! THAT'S NOT LIKELY TO HAPPEN AGIN!

I...UH...YOU'RE RIGHT! WE CAN'T PASS IT UP! I--I RECKON EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT ALL RIGHT FER US!

MONTE HALE WESTERN

TWO DAYS LATER, AS THE DEADWOOD STAGECOACH REACHES THE MIDWAY POINT OF ITS JOURNEY...

I'M SHORE GLAD YO'RE WITH US THIS TRIP, MONTE!

IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO HAVE AN EXTRA HAND WHEN YOU'VE GOT TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS IN GOLD RIDING IN THE COACHBOX. EH, JEENS?

THAT'S THE TRUTH! WE'RE COMING TO HANGMAN'S BEND NOW! THAT'S WHAR FOUR STAGES HAVE BIN ROBBED IN THE PAST MONTH!

THE SHERIFF TOLD ME ABOUT IT, JEENS! HE THINKS BEN SWEENEY AND HIS GANG ARE THE ONES RESPONSIBLE! IN FACT, THAT'S WHY I CAME ALONG!

SUDDENLY!

REACH FER THE SKIES!

WHOOAAA!

GET DOWN, JEENS! TAKE COVER BEHIND THE COACH! I DON'T WANT YOU TO GET HURT! BESIDES MYSELF I'D TAKE CARE OF THESE COVOTES, PERSONALLY!

IT'S MONTE HALE! HE'S RIDING GUARD... I-I-I-

I'VE GOTTA TAKE COVER!

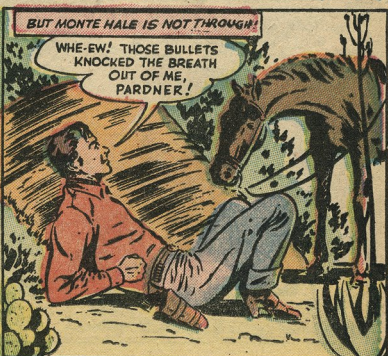
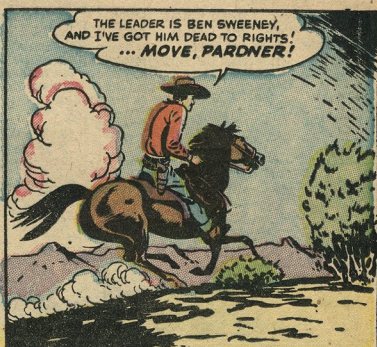
HALE SHOTS TOO STRAIGHT! HE'S WOUNDED MUH MEN! I WUZ AFRAID SOMETHING WOULD GO WRONG THIS TIME!

I NEVER SAW PURTIER SHOOTING IN ALL MUH BORNED DAYS! TOO BAD THEIR LEADER GOT AWAY, MONTE!

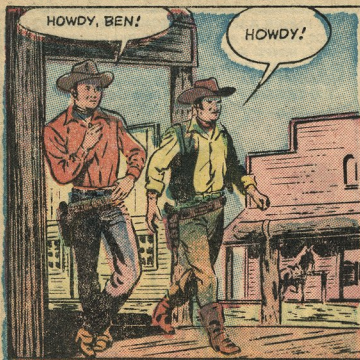
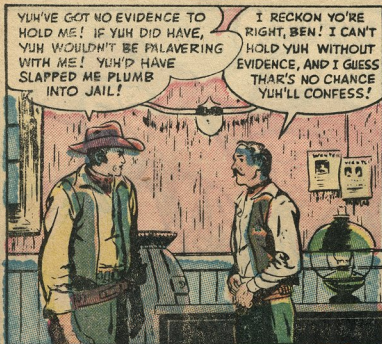
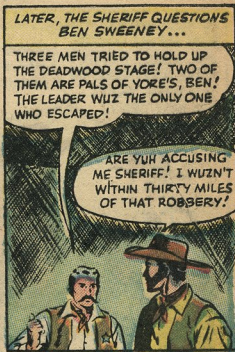
PARDNER SHOULD BE CLOSE BY! I TOLD HIM TO FOLLOW THE COACH!

TWEET-TWEET!

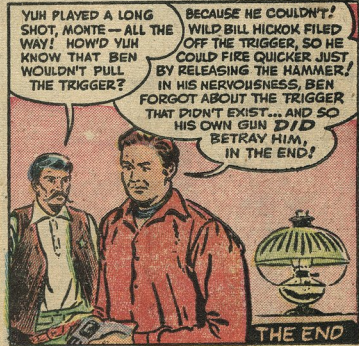
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UNLUCKY LUCKY

FER THE LAST TIME, LUCKY, I'M
TELLING YUH I'M NOT INTERESTED
IN ANYTHING YUH'VE GOT TO SAY!
NOW GET OFF MUH RANCH!

LOOK HYAR, COLLINS!
THIS IS NO WAY TO
TREAT ME! I'LL HAVE
YUH KNOW I'M A MAN
OF PARTS!

THEN YUH OUGHT TO GO BACK TO THE FACTORY!
THEY FORGOT TO PUT ALL YORE PARTS TOGETHER!

THAT SHOWS HOW STUPID YUH ARE!
YUH DON'T EVEN KNOW THAT
"A MAN OF PARTS" IS JUST
AN EXPRESSION!

WHO ARE YUH
CALLING STUPID?

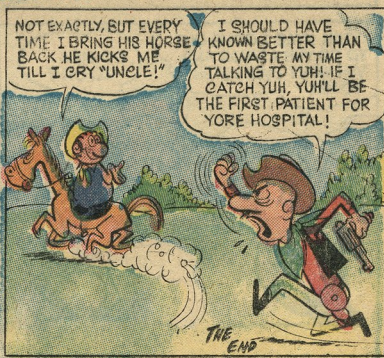
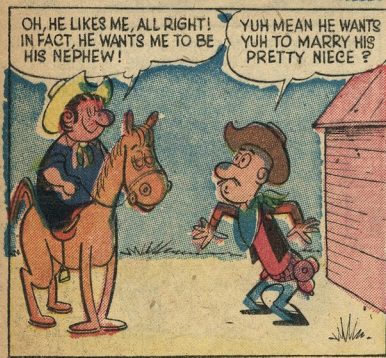
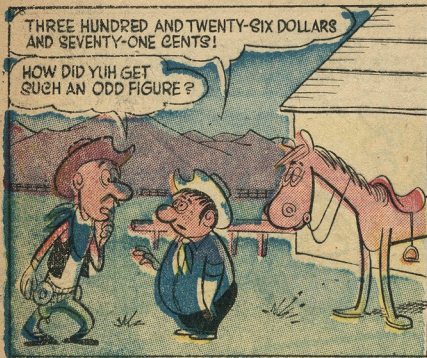
YUH! HYAR I COME OUT
TO DO YUH A FAVOR AND
YUH WON'T EVEN LISTEN
TO ME!

DO ME A
FAVOR?

THAT'S RIGHT! I'M GOING AROUND
TO EVERYONE TO TRY TO RAISE
MONEY SO WE CAN BUILD A
HOSPITAL IN TOWN! THEN, IN CASE
YUH TAKE SICK THERE'D BE SOME
PLACE YUH COULD GO!

HOW MUCH
MONEY DO
YUH HAVE
TO RAISE?

MONTE HALE WESTERN





SHOTGUN MAN



TAD KEELER, gulping down coffee and biscuits watched his mother as she fussed with the dishes. There was a strange silence in the kitchen. Tad wondered if she would let him go peacefully, or if she would cry and beg him to change his mind. He hoped she wouldn't cry. He never wanted to see her cry again, not after last month, when they had brought Pa home—with a road agent's bullet in his chest.

Tad swallowed the last of the coffee and cleared his throat. "Reckon I better be gitting along, Mom. Mr. Weller said to be at the station in time to help 'em load the stage. I suppose he wants to get his money's worth out of me, seeing as he gave me the job riding shotgun."

His mother turned from her work. "Here's some lunch," she said. "You'll be wanting it before you get to Dry Valley. And be careful, Tad. You know how I feel about your taking this job. You're too young to be riding shotgun on a stage. But you're as stubborn as a Missouri mule, same as your Pa was, and I know words ain't going to change anything. So go to your job, Tad, and God bless you."

Tad kissed her, took his Pa's old shotgun down from over the door, and left. In his belt he also carried Pa's six-shooter. A heavy Colt .45 with three notches in the butt. Tad buttoned his jacket tightly over the revolver. No use giving Zack Morgan anything else to ride, him about. Zack was the stage driver, and ever since he'd heard that Tad was going to ride shotgun he had been ribbing the boy.

"Ain't never going to be another stage hold-up in these here parts," Zack had told the loungers before the stage office. "Them road agents will come riding up and take one look at our new shotgun man, and then they'll just naturally keel over and die laughing. Never saw so much shotgun in my life—with so little boy to go with it. I swear he makes the gun look like one of them cannon I used to work for old General Grant..."

Tad scowled as he walked toward the station. Maybe he was small for his age in a

country where they grew them large, but he could shoot. His Pa had seen to that. And he wasn't scared of anything that walked or crawled.

Mr. Weller, the dumpy, middle-aged station agent, looked up as Tad approached the waiting stage. He had just lifted a heavy chest to the driver's seat and he was breathing hard.

"There you are, Tad," he gasped. "Zack's all set as soon as I get the passengers aboard. Only got three this morning. You got your shotgun all oiled and loaded?"

"Yes sir."

"Good. Good. You'll be all right, lad." Mr. Weller patted Tad on the shoulder. "You know I admired and respected your Pa, boy. That's one reason I gave you the job, of course. But it wasn't the only reason. Maybe you ain't exactly a man yet, but you'll do. Just keep cool and keep your eyes open. That chest I just loaded contains the pay money for some miners in Dry Valley. It's full of silver dollars."

Zack Morgan came out of the stage office and climbed to the high driver's seat. He spat tobacco and peered down at Tad with bright little eyes.

"Better get aboard, shotgun man. It's powerful long and hard drive to Dry Valley. If I was to forget and leave you behind I'd feel plumb unprotected."

Tad climbed to the high seat beside Zack, ignoring the older man's jokes as he watched the three passengers enter the creaking stage. Two women and a man. The women were Mrs. Houghton, the grocer's wife, and Elizabeth Benton, one of the girls who worked at the Little Nugget. Tad had never seen the man before.

He was a middle sized man, dressed in black broadcloth and white, fresh linen. On his head was the inevitable Stetson and he wore a belted gun. On his feet, Tad noted, were regular cowboy boots, high heeled and awkward, instead of shoes. That was funny. Evidently the man had walked to the station from the hotel, for there was no horse at the railing.

Mighty uncomfortable, all the same, and a man who could afford clothes such as the stranger wore ought to be able to buy regular shoes.

Tad's musing was cut short by the pistol crack of Zack's whip. "Giddap," Zack roared. The six horses put their shoulders into the harness and the stage rolled and creaked out of Deadwood. Zack spat tobacco, worked his whip, and in general put on a good show for the few early risers who had bothered to see them off. At last! His first real man's job. This was the life.

Five hours later he wasn't so sure. They had left Fort Bellows behind now and were lurching slowly along the twin ruts that led up and up into Stone Valley. It was there, amid the deeply etched gullies and ravines, that trouble could be expected. There the road, if it could be called so, skirted close to rock formations that could have concealed a gang of ewlhoots.

Two more hours passed and Tad felt better. They were out of the bandit country and nothing had happened. Now there was only forty miles of flat desert to cross before they reached Dry Valley. Tad grinned again and felt the dust on his face crack like a plaster of paris mask. He must be a sight, sure enough.

Something nudged him in the back. He turned and looked into the muzzle of a large revolver, held by the man who had been riding as a passenger. The bandit was clinging precariously to the step, motioning with the gun and shouting at Zack Morgan.

"Pull up the team," the man shouted. "Won't be anyone hurt unless you start it—and that'd be silly, because I got the drop. Pull 'em up. Easy now."

The stage rattled to a stop, the horses puffing and blowing and glad of the rest. The bandit reached up and twitched Tad's shotgun away from him, flung it to the ground. Then he disarmed Zack, who was swearing steadily.

"Toss the chest down into the road, you." The bandit motioned at Tad with his revolver. There was nothing else to do, so Tad tugged and hauled until the heavy chest toppled over and fell.

The bandit addressed Zack. "Turn yore horses and go back the way yuh came, toward

Deadwood. Go a mile or two and don't look back. After that I don't care what yuh do."

Tad thought fast as the stage turned in the narrow road. He still had the revolver tucked into his waistband, but there was no chance to use it. The bandit was covering them from the road, smiling a little in derision. But where, Tad wondered, was the man's horse? He must have one somewhere, or he must be expecting someone to pick him up. No man dared to be left alone in country like this without a horse. Especially with a heavy chest of silver to transport. And he remembered the man's boots, the riding boots where there should have been shoes. He did have a horse around somewhere!

Tad jumped from the high seat and started running. Something buzzed in his ear and little splashes of dust spouted near his feet. The bandit was shooting at him. Then Tad was out of sight in tall growing cactus and bearing to his left, toward the one place that a horse might be hidden. A little, narrow, stone walled ravine that he had noticed a piece back, as they passed it.

Tad found the narrow gully that had been hastily fenced, at one end. A horse nickered softly at him as he entered. Then a slug slammed nastily off a rock and Tad ducked, reaching for his own gun. He had been wise to bring it after all—and to keep it so well concealed.

The bandit ran toward him, his gun spitting yellow flame. Tad laid the muzzle of his own weapon across the rocks. The bandit thought he was dealing with a scared, unarmed kid. Tad squeezed off a shot . . .

THAT night, after they had reached Deadwood and turned the wounded bandit over to the sheriff, and the silver over to the miners, Tad and Zack Morgan walked toward their hotel. A friend spoke to Zack.

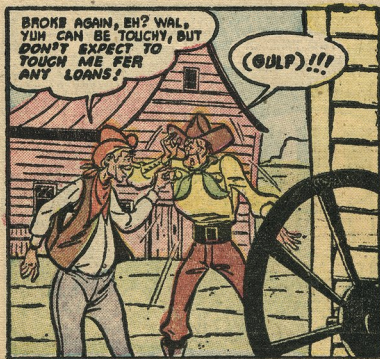
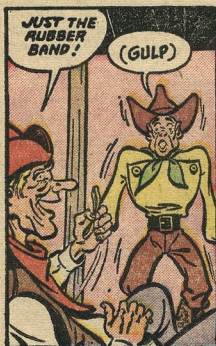
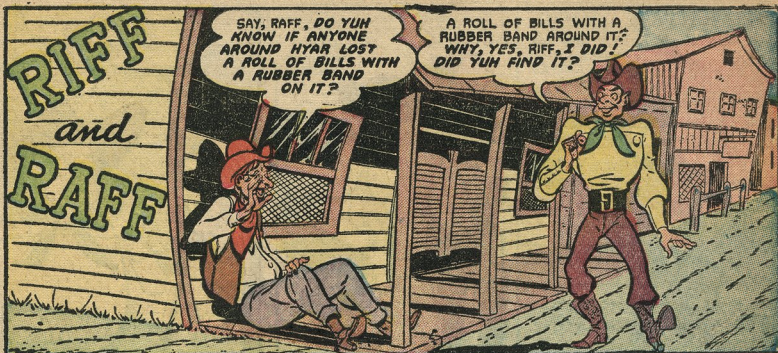
"Hi, Zack. Been a week since I seen yuh. Who's the young feller with ye?"

Zack spat accurately. He reached over and put his arm around Tad's shoulders. "My new shotgun man," he said.

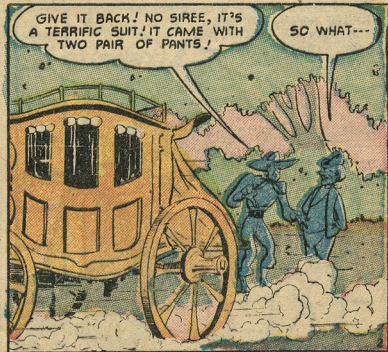
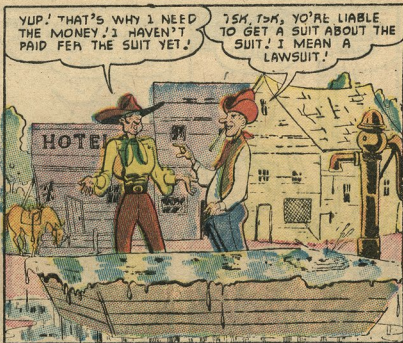
THE END

MONTE HALE WESTERN

RIFF and RAFF



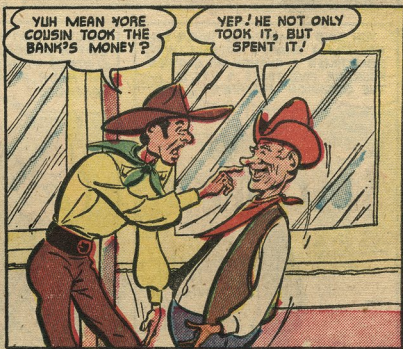
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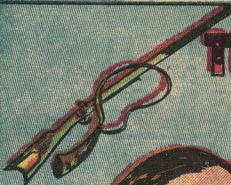


MONTE HALE WESTERN



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THEY MADE HISTORY



SAM HOUSTON

BORN IN 1793, DIED IN 1836. SAM SPENT A GOOD PART OF HIS EARLY LIFE LIVING WITH THE CHEROKEE INDIANS. WHEN HE RETURNED TO CIVILIZATION, HE BECAME A SCHOOL TEACHER. WAR BROKE OUT AND SAM ENLISTED IN THE ARMY, HERE HE BECAME NOTED FOR HIS COURAGE IN THE FACE OF DANGER. HE WAS CHOSEN FIRST PRESIDENT OF TEXAS. HE WAS A BRAVE SOLDIER AND A GREAT STATESMAN.



JOHN CHARLES FREMONT

BORN IN 1813, DIED IN 1890. JOHN TOOK TO THE TRAIL AT AN EARLY AGE. WHILE IN THE U. S. ARMY HE WAS CHOSEN TO FIND THE BEST ROADS ACROSS THE VAST PLAINS AND THE ROCKIES TO OREGON AND CALIFORNIA, A GREAT TASK WHICH FEW MEN WOULD HAVE ACCEPTED. TEAMING UP WITH THE FAMOUS KIT CARSON, WHO ACTED AS HIS GUIDE. THEY ENDURED HARDSHIPS, FOUGHT INDIANS, BUT MILE BY MILE THEY SHORTENED THE DISTANCE UNTIL THEY REACHED THEIR GOAL.



WILLIAM CLARK

TWO GREAT PIONEERS WHO BLAZED THE TRAIL ACROSS UNEXPLORED PARTS OF THE GREAT WEST, BRAVING HARDSHIPS AND DANGERS FROM BOTH NATURE AND THE HOSTILE INDIANS. THE EXPLOITS OF THEIR TRAVELS MAKES INTERESTING READING TO PERSONS WHO ENJOY BOTH ADVENTURE AND THRILLS. WHAT THESE PIONEERS WITNESSED ON THEIR TRIP THROUGH THE GREAT WEST IS UNBELIEVABLE BUT TRUE. AFTER TWO AND A HALF YEARS, AND COVERING 8,000 MILES THEY REACHED THE END OF THEIR TRAIL. THE PACIFIC COAST.



MERIWETHER LEWIS

OLD TIMER

in the LAST STAND

WELL, TOM, I RECKON YOU KNOW HOW WE OLD-TIMERS FEEL ABOUT YOU! IF IT WARN'T FOR YOUR GUNS PRAIRIE GULCH WOULD HAVE BEEN A DRIFTER'S TOWN LONG TIME BACK!

SHUCKS, AL...YUH MAKE IT SOUND LIKE I KEPT THE PEACE ALONE! IF IT WARN'T FOR YOU HONEST CITIZENS I NEVER COULD'VE ENFORCED THE LAW!

THE LAW HAD COME TO THE SMALL TOWN OF PRAIRIE GULCH! IT WAS NO LONGER NECESSARY FOR THE SHERIFF TO BACK UP HIS AUTHORITY WITH A SIX-GUN! OLD TOM MEADE HAD KEPT THE PEACE IN TOWN FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS AND NOW THAT MARSHAL LAW HAD FINALLY REACHED THE TERRITORY, HE DECIDED IT WAS TIME TO HANG HIS GUNS UP! SUDDENLY...

TOM! TOM! IT JUST CAME OVER THE WIRELESS! RED BENSON GOT OUTTA JAIL TWO WEEKS AGO AND HE'S HEADIN' THIS WAY!

YOU'RE TELLIN' THE WRONG MAN, SPARKS! I JUST RETIRED AS SHERIFF! SPEAK TO YOUNG COLBY HERE!



BUT DON'T YOU REMEMBER? RED SWORE HE'D KILL YOU WHEN HE GOT OUT OF JAIL! EVEN IF IT MEANT HIS OWN HANGIN'!

THAT WAS FIVE YEARS AGO! SEEMS TO ME A MAN SHOULD BE PUT AWAY FOR LIFE FOR THE WAY HE PISTOL WHIPPED THAT YOUNG 'UN!



MONTE HALE WESTERN



THAT KID W- PISTOL WHIPPED IS SHERIFF NOW. I'D JUST LIKE TO SEE BENSON TRY ANYTHING IN HIS TERRITORY!



IF BENSON DOES SHOW UP CAN'T YOU ARREST HIM FUR THREATENING TOM?

CAN'T ARREST A MAN WITHOUT PROOF!

TOM'S RIGHT! I CAN'T TOUCH BENSON UNLESS HE TRIES SOMETHING!



SEEMS TO ME TOM'S TAKIN' THIS TOO LIGHT! THAT BENSON'S A DANGEROUS HOMERB AND FIVE YEARS IN JAIL AIN'T GONNA MAKE HIM ANY BETTER!

MEBBE! ALL I KNOW IS

TOM WOULDN'T

STAND A CHANCE SLAPPIN' LEATHER AGIN BENSON! TOM AIN'T AS YOUNG AS HE USETA BE!



YUH KNOW, THEY'RE RIGHT! MEBBE I SHOULD HAVE A COUPLA DEPUTIES SORTA TRAIL AFTER YOU!

DEPUTIES GOT MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TUH DO THAN DOG THE STEPS OF AN OLD MAN! ANYWAY... I DOUBT IF RED'LL SHOW HIS FACE!



YOU TOM MEADE, SHERIFF OF THIS BURG?

MY NAME'S MEADE BUT I'M NOT SHERIFF ANYMORE! THE MAN YUH WANT IS THE YOUNG FELLA STANDIN' IN FRONT OF THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE!



UH-UH! YOU'RE THE GUY I WANT! GOTTA MESSAGE FOR YUH! FRIEND OF MINE SAID HE'LL BE HEADIN THIS WAY SOON AND HE'D APPRECIATE IF'N YUH'D KEEP YOUR GUNS HANDY! SAID THAT HE WOULDN'T WANTA SHOOT YUH!

HA! HA!

MONTE HALE WESTERN

AND SO IT WAS THAT
THREE SHORT NIGHTS
LATER...

TOM! TOM!

IT'S BENSON! HE JUST RODE
INTO TOWN AND HE'S OVER
AT THAT SALOON SWEARIN'
HE'S GOIN' TO GET YOU
ON SIGHT!



WE'LL SETTLE HIS
HASH RIGHT NOW! I'VE
BEEN WAITIN' FUR THIS
DAY TO GET EVEN FUR
THAT PISTOL WHIPPIN'
HE GAVE ME!

WAIT A SECOND,
YOUNG 'UN! YOU'RE
SHERIFF NOW AND
YOU'VE GOT TO LEARN
NOT TO USE THAT
BADGE TO SETTLE
PERSONAL
GRUDGES!



I THINK
I'VE GOT A
BETTER WAY
TO HANDLE
THIS!

**TOM!
WHERE
ARE YOU
GOIN'?**



WELL I'VE BEEN
PROMISING THE
JENNINGS I'D COME
DOWN AND SPEND A
COUPLA WEEKS AT HIS
RANCH! I RECKON NOW'S
AS GOOD A TIME AS
ANY TUH KEEP THAT
PROMISE! I... I SURE
COULD USE THE
REST!



IF THAT WAS ANY OTHER
MAN RIDING AWAY FROM
A SHOWDOWN WITH BENSON
I COULD UNDERSTAND IT!
BUT I NEVER THOUGHT
I'D SEE THE
DAY WHEN TOM
WOULD TURN
HIS BACK ON
A FIGHT!

I KNOW
WHAT YOU
MEAN! I
ALWAYS
FIGGERED TOM
WOULD RATHER DIE
THAN DO SOMETHING
LIKE THIS!

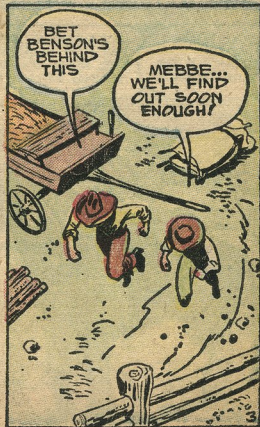


HEY! SOME-
THING'S GOIN' ON
DOWN AT THE
SALOON!



BET
BENSON'S
BEHIND
THIS

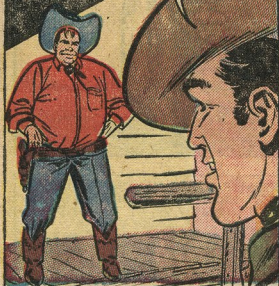
MEBBE...
WE'LL FIND
OUT SOON
ENOUGH!



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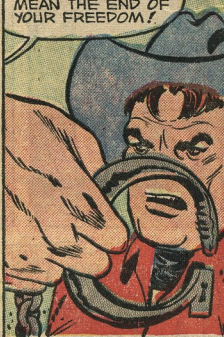
WELL I'LL BE DOGGONED! LOOK WHO'S SHERIFF NOW! YOU DON'T LOOK NONE THE WORSE FUR THE PISTOL WHIPPIN' I GAVE YUH FIVE YEARS AGO... THAT FIGHT COST ME FIVE YEARS IN JAIL!

AND TONIGHT YOU'RE GONNA SPEND ANOTHER NIGHT IN JAIL FUR DISTURBIN' THE PEACE!



I'M WARNIN' YUH... I'D JUST AS SOON KILL A MAN AS TO SPEND ANOTHER NIGHT BEHIND BARS!

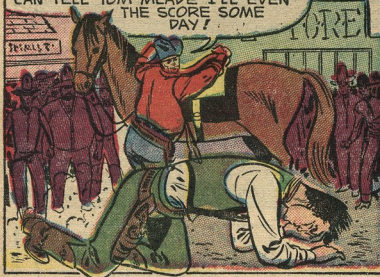
DON'T THREATEN ME, RED! IT MIGHT MEAN THE END OF YOUR FREEDOM!



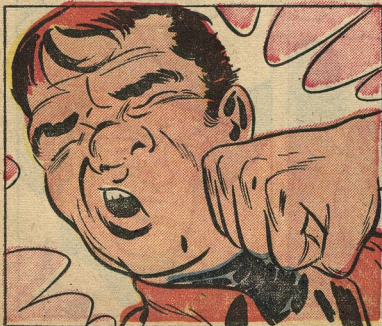
IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN JUST YOU TO DRAG ME IN!



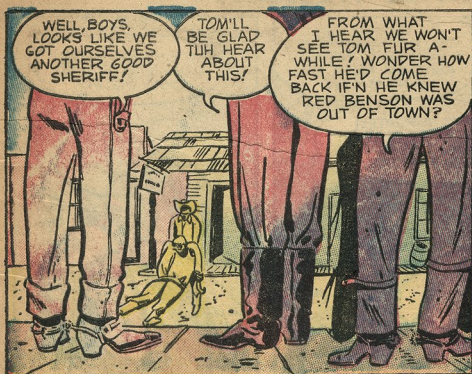
I'M LEAVIN' TOWN NOW... BUT YOU CAN TELL TOM MEADE I'LL EVEN THE SCORE SOME DAY!



YOU AIN'T GOIN' NO PLACE, RED! YOU'RE SPENDIN' THE NIGHT IN JAIL AND TOMORROW I'LL PERSONALLY ESCORT YOU OUT OF TOWN!



MONTE HALE WESTERN



WELL, BOYS, LOOKS LIKE WE GOT OURSELVES ANOTHER GOOD SHERIFF!

TOM'LL BE GLAD TUH HEAR ABOUT THIS!

FROM WHAT I HEAR WE WON'T SEE TOM FUR A WHILE! WONDER HOW FAST HE'D COME BACK IF'N HE KNEW RED BENSON WAS OUT OF TOWN?



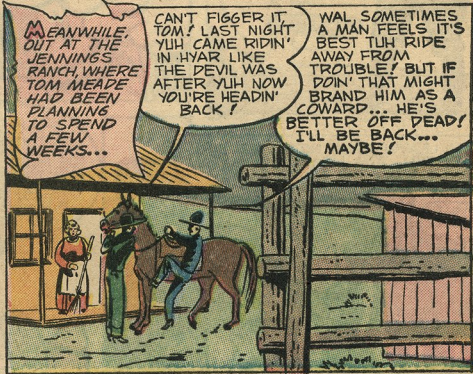
EARLY THE NEXT MORNING IN FRONT OF THE JAIL-HOUSE...

OKAY RED, MOUNT UP, I WANT YOU OUT OF THIS TERRITORY AS FAST AS YOUR HORSE'LL CARRY YOU!



SOME- DAY I'LL CATCH YOU WITHOUT THAT TIN BADGE!

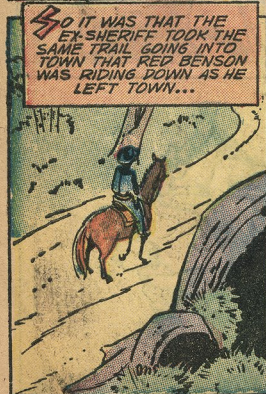
I'D LIKE TUH SEE THAT DAY MYSELF! NOW HIT THE TRAIL!



MEANWHILE, OUT AT THE JENNING'S RANCH, WHERE TOM MEADE HAD BEEN PLANNING TO SPEND A FEW WEEKS...

CAN'T FIGGER IT TOM! LAST NIGHT YUH CAME RIDIN' IN HYAR LIKE THE DEVIL WAS AFTER YUH NOW YOU'RE HEADIN' BACK!

WAL, SOMETIMES A MAN FEELS IT'S BEST TUH RIDE AWAY FROM TROUBLE! BUT IF DOIN' THAT MIGHT BRAND HIM AS A COWARD... HE'S BETTER OFF DEAD! I'LL BE BACK... MAYBE!



SO IT WAS THAT THE EX-SHERIFF TOOK THE SAME TRAIL GOING INTO TOWN THAT RED BENSON WAS RIDING DOWN AS HE LEFT TOWN...



SEEMS LIKE SOME- ONE'S HEADIN' THIS WAY! MUST BE ONE OF JENNING'S RANCH-HANDS!



WELL I'LL BE A...! SEEMS LIKE THE CARDS ARE STACKED MY WAY FUR ONCE!

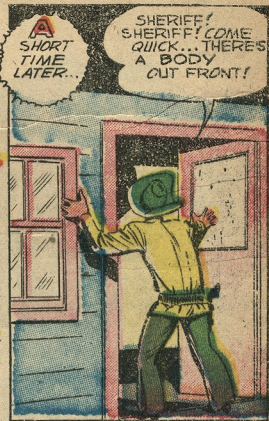
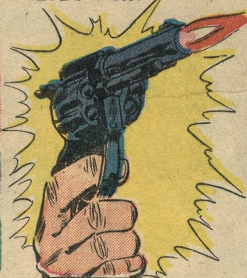
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RED! RED BENSON!

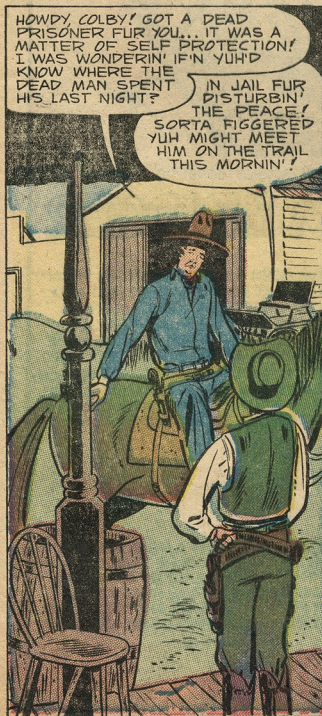
LET'S NOT WASTE TIME SHERIFF! I SAID I'D COME FUR YUH... START DRAWIN'!

TOM KNEW HE DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE BUT THIS IS WHY HE HAD BEEN RIDING BACK TO TOWN... HE SLAPPED LEATHER BUT BENSON'S GUN BUCKED AND ROARED BEFORE THE EX-SHERIFF COULD LEVEL HIS...



A SHORT TIME LATER...

SHERIFF! SHERIFF! COME QUICK... THERE'S A BODY CUT FRONT!



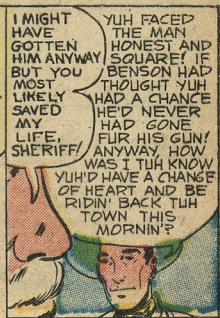
HOWDY, COLBY! GOT A DEAD PRISONER FUR YOU... IT WAS A MATTER OF SELF PROTECTION! I WAS WONDERIN' IF'N YUH'D KNOW WHERE THE DEAD MAN SPENT HIS LAST NIGHT?

IN JAIL FUR DISTURBIN' THE PEACE! SORTA FIGGERED YUH MIGHT MEET HIM ON THE TRAIL THIS MORNIN'!



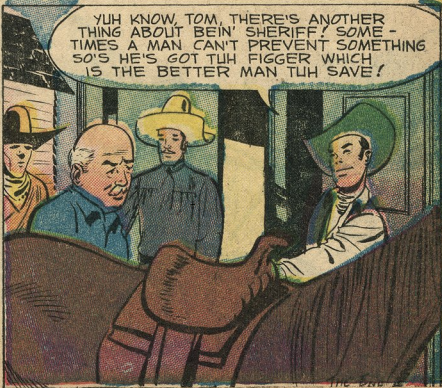
YUH MEAN TUH TELL ME YUH BEAT BENSON TUH THE DRAW, TOM?

NOT EXACTLY... HE FIRED TWICE AFORE I GOT A SHOT IN! THAT'S WHAT MADE ME LOOK AT HIS BULLETS... SOME ONE TOOK THE POWDER OUT AND STUFFED THEM WITH CLAY!



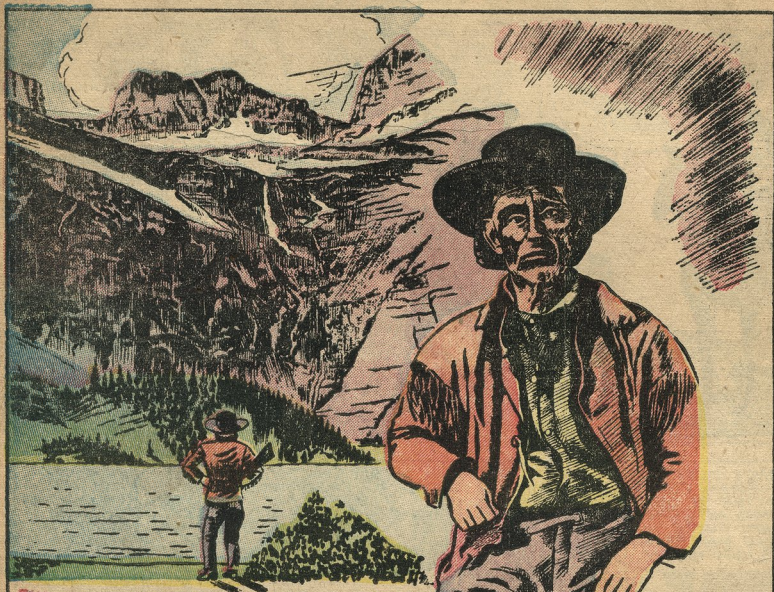
I MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN HIM ANYWAY BUT YOU MOST LIKELY SAVED MY LIFE, SHERIFF!

YUH FACED THE MAN HONEST AND SQUARE! IF BENSON HAD THOUGHT YUH HAD A CHANCE HE'D NEVER HAD GONE FUR HIS GUN! ANYWAY, HOW WAS I TUH KNOW YUH'D HAVE A CHANGE OF HEART AND BE RIDIN' BACK TUH TOWN THIS MORNIN'?



YUH KNOW, TOM, THERE'S ANOTHER THING ABOUT BEIN' SHERIFF! SOME - TIMES A MAN CAN'T PREVENT SOMETHING SO'S HE'S GOT TUH FIGGER WHICH IS THE BETTER MAN TUH SAVE!

MONTE HALE WESTERN



JIM IS SOMETIMES CALLED THE DISCOVERER OF GREAT SALT LAKE IN 1824, AND WAS ONE OF THE FIRST WHITE MEN TO EXPLORE THE YELLOWSTONE PARK REGION EXTENSIVELY. HE BUILT FORT BRIDGER, A TRADING POST IN 1842 ON THE BLACK FORK OF GREEN RIVER. HE COULD MAP ANY PART OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS WITH CHARCOAL ON A PIECE OF BUFFALO SKIN.

PIONEER AMONG PIONEERS

JIM BRIDGER

JIM BRIDGER, BORN IN 1795, BEGAN HIS FRONTIER EDUCATION AT FORT OSAGE IN 1810 AND LATER WORKED WITH THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY. HE SCOUTED MANY TRAILS, INCLUDING THE ONE THAT BEARS HIS NAME. HE WAS SUCH A GREAT SCOUT, THAT THE U.S. ARMY LOOKED FOR HIS ADVICE IN FRONTIER MATTERS. ALIVE BRIDGER WAS A LEGEND, WHEN HE DIED, HE INSPIRED COUNTLESS OTHERS TO FOLLOW HIS TRAILS.



HE BECAME FAMOUS AS A MOUNTAIN MAN, FOR ABOUT FIFTY YEARS HE TRAVELED OVER THE ROCKIES. SHOT BY AN INDIAN, HE CARRIED AN ARROW HEAD IN HIS BACK FOR THREE YEARS, AND THE WOUND NEVER BECAME INFECTED. HE WAS THAT TOUGH!

MONTE HALE WESTERN

MOLASSES MOUTH



**LIGHT
HEADED!**

